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To: ["R7 Senior" <Staff>](#)
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Subject: International Brotherhood of Teamsters (release) - Community, Environmental and Labor Coalition Applaud Missouri Attorney General for Legal Action Against Republic Services

Community, Environmental and Labor Coalition Applaud Missouri Attorney General for Legal Action Against Republic Services

By Targeted News Service – 3/28/13

The International Brotherhood of Teamsters issued the following news release:

Teamsters Joint Council 13 in St. Louis, Missouri Jobs with Justice, and Missouri Coalition for the Environment, applauded Missouri Attorney General Chris Koster for taking legal action against Republic Services [NYSE: RSG] yesterday for the ongoing environmental health and safety crisis at the Bridgeton/Westlake landfill.

Republic's Bridgeton landfill has been in the news recently due to citizen complaints about persistent stench, the expanding underground fire, a recent explosion, and the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) investigation of radiation levels and groundwater contamination. The landfill is part of the West Lake Landfill Superfund Site where radioactive nuclear weapons wastes are buried.

According to the Missouri Office of the Attorney General, the lawsuit (docket number: 13SL-CC01088) seeks to force Republic to address the odor problems and correct the environmental violations, as well as to provide remedies to help local residents and businesses deal with the ongoing effects of the burning waste. The lawsuit also seeks to ensure that Republic, rather than taxpayers, pays for the costs of experts hired by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to perform ongoing, intensive environmental testing. The DNR had officially requested the attorney general bring legal action against Republic Services just last Thursday.

"We commend the Attorney General for taking on Republic Services," said Marvin Kropp, President of Teamsters Joint Council 13. "We also commend the Department of Natural Resources for referring Republic to the AG's office due to its egregious failures.

"Less than two weeks ago our coalition sponsored a briefing, during which independent experts talked with public officials about their assessment of the risks posed by the fire and the nuclear weapons wastes at the site. We have already contacted the Occupational Safety and Health Administration in this regard. Should the landfill fire reach the radioactive wastes it would be catastrophic.

"The families who live, and work around this landfill should not be exposed to these risks for one minute longer. The attorney general's office should also see to it that the full present and future cost of dealing with the Bridgeton landfill fire and its remediation fall squarely on Republic, and not on Missouri taxpayers, local businesses or residents," Kropp said.

"Workers and residents in North Saint Louis County and St. Charles must be protected from Republic's negligence. This is not the first environmental disaster at a Republic-owned landfill - for the past nine years a major uncontrolled underground fire has been raging at Republic's Countywide Landfill in Ohio," said Joan Suarez of Missouri Jobs with Justice. "The company just settled an 800-plaintiff lawsuit there, but the site is still a disaster. We encourage the Office of the Attorney General to do everything in its power to force Republic Services to clean up this site for good."

"Communities around the landfill have long smelled the stench coming from Republic's landfill, but the problem could be much bigger than that," said Ed Smith of the Missouri Coalition for the Environment. "The EPA detected radioactivity in the air when it flew its anti-terrorism ASPECT plane over the landfill, we want EPA to disclose its data and infrared readings, and fully characterize the wastes and the site. Assurances that the landfill fire and radioactive wastes will not become one big problem have not been adequately backed up by data being made available to the public. Full disclosure is needed."